

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method for aiding in differentiating irritable bowel syndrome from inflammatory bowel disease by determining the level of total endogenous human lactoferrin in clinical specimens, such as feces, mucus and bile, wherein an elevated level of lactoferrin substantially precludes diagnoses of IBS and other noninflammatory etiologies, and a kit usable in such method are provided. Further provided is a method for quantitating the level of total endogenous human lactoferrin in clinical specimens, such as feces, mucus and bile, to monitor gastrointestinal inflammation in persons having inflammatory bowel disease.